



Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien
German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo (DIJ)
ドイツ日本研究所

International Workshop

Well-being in Ritual Practice: Social Interaction, Communication, Self-Improvement?

13-15 October 2011

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ), Tokyo, Japan

in collaboration with

Interdisziplinäres Zentrum für Historische Anthropologie, Freie Universität Berlin

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The German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) is a research institution dedicated to investigating modern Japan. It conducts interdisciplinary research on Japanese society, economics, politics and culture and seeks to advance knowledge about Japan and contribute to intercultural understanding. The institute was founded in 1988, with Josef Kreiner as its first director. Until 2002, it was funded by the Philipp-Franz-von-Siebold-Stiftung, a foundation established by the German Federal Government. In 2002, the DIJ was integrated into the Foundation of German Humanities Institutes Abroad ([DGLA](http://www.dgia.de)), financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The DIJ is unique in that it promotes regional studies by carrying out interdisciplinary research on-site. It is free to determine its own research agenda and does not undertake any commissioned research. DIJ regularly hosts lectures, symposia, specialist conferences and study groups directed at academics and the interested general public. The aim of these activities is to promote exchange of information on current work, to foster cooperation with the international scientific community, and thereby to facilitate ongoing research. Further information: www.dijtokyo.org

Well-being in Ritual Practice: Social Interaction, Communication, Self-Improvement?

Organizers: Susanne Klien, DIJ, and Christoph Wulf, FU Berlin

Purpose of the workshop

The aim of the workshop is to discuss a wide range of ritual practices including seasonal festivities, ancestor veneration activities, praying for good luck and similar events as dynamic arenas where collective emotions are staged and subjective well-being emerges. We define well-being as broadly containing the three aspects of enjoyment, accomplishment and satisfaction. Ritual practices and processes are more often associated with strict etiquette, social order and hierarchy than with the expression of personal emotion or self-improvement. We will examine what role the staging and venting of emotions plays on ritualized occasions and what eudaimonic features can be observed. The underlying assumption is that emotional states such as well-being and happiness are constituted to a significant extent by the individual's engagement with its social environment, drawing on Kitayama's and Markus' notion of well-being as a 'collaborative project' (2000). We will focus on repetitive practices as a communication site that serves as the starting point for the negotiation of subjective well-being. Special attention will be directed to the issue of individual agency, how it is framed in the larger social context in which the ritual takes place and aspects of self-enhancement that emerge in the process.

Well-being in Ritual Practices asks two main questions: 1) What insights does the combined study of ritual and well-being provide? To what degree and in what ways are the concepts of "ritual as well-being" and "well-being as ritual" useful in the fields of area studies, Japanese studies and anthropology? 2) What results does the combined examination of well-being and ritual yield with regard to the negotiation of selfhood in its wider social framework?

Programme (overview)

1) Thursday, 13 October 2011

DIJ Forum 18.30-20.00

Reception 20.00-21.00

2) Friday 14 October 2011

Workshop 09.00-17.30 (including lunch and coffee breaks)

Dinner 18.00-20.00

3) Saturday 15 October 2011

Workshop 09.00-13.30 (including lunch and coffee breaks)

Programme (detailed)

13 October (Thu)

Open to the public

NB: This will be the only part of the workshop that is open to the public. This is also a great opportunity for workshop participants to get together at the DIJ before the closed part of the workshop.

18.30-20.00 **DIJ Forum Lecture**

Christoph Wulf & Shoko Suzuki

“What is a Happy Family? German and Japanese Case Studies”

20.00-21.00 Reception

14 October (Fri)

Closed workshop

09.00-09.05 **Florian Coulmas** (Director of DIJ)

Opening remarks

09.05-09.15 **Susanne Klien & Christoph Wulf**

Introduction to the workshop

Session 1 Ethnographic Studies of German and Japanese Festive Rituals, Part 1

20-25 minute presentations followed by Q & A/Discussion

Session 1: This session aims to discuss aspects of individual and collective well-being in seasonal festivities in both German and Japanese contexts, including sacred rituals but also practices that have taken on a more secular note over time. Rituals are often associated with rigidity, constraints and prescribed, meaningless behavior. Here, however, we will focus on the opportunities ritual practices offer to their participants as strategic instruments to achieve well-being, be it at an individual or at a collective level. We will examine empirical cases of dynamic interpretations of ritual practices by those involved in accordance with contemporary needs and how this affects their well-being.

- 09.15-10.30 **Yoko Nagao:**
- “Folk Performing Arts, Community Life and Well-being: Why Shishi-mai Matters in Toyama”
- Klaus-Peter Köpping:**
- „The Meanings of Happiness/Good Fortune in Japanese Folk-Religion: The Hana-Matsuri of the Southern Alpine Region“
- Presentation plus 12 minute film
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- 10.30-11.00 Coffee Break
- Session 1* *Ethnographic Studies of German and Japanese Festive Rituals, Part 2*
- 20-25 minute presentations followed by Q & A/Discussion
- 11.00-12.30 **Christoph Wulf:**
- “New Year in Japan as a source of staged family happiness”
- Shoko Suzuki**
- “Christmas in Germany as a source of staged family happiness”
- 12.30-14.00 Lunch Break
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- Session 2* *Communication, interaction, well-being, Part 1*
- 20-25 minute presentations followed by Q & A/Discussion

Session 2: This slot discusses the correlation of communication, interaction and well-being in ritual practices. Contrary to common assumptions that rituals constitute a physical and mental burden for those actively involved, in practice they often enhance the lives of participants, providing them with a sense of responsibility, social interaction and intergenerational exchange. What positive emotions can be observed to emerge from interaction during ritual practices?

14.00-15.30 **Ingrid Kellermann**

“Can Happiness be Created in Rituals?”

Peter Ackermann

“The Price of Ritual”

15.30-16.00 Coffee Break

Session 2 *Communication, interaction, well-being, Part 2*

20 minute presentations followed by Q & A/Discussion

16.00-17.30 **John Traphagan**

“Ancestor Ritual and Family Well-Being in Japan”

Bruce White

“Competing for Local Souls: Christian Pastoral Care vs. Local Buddhist Power in Omihachiman, Shiga Prefecture”

William Lee

“Whose Festival is it? Changing Patterns of Participation in Japanese Festivals”

18.00-20.00 Dinner

15 October (Sat)

Closed workshop

Session 3 *Ritual Practices as Self-Enhancement and Development*

20 minute presentations followed by Q & A/Discussion

Session 3: This slot examines the relation between ritual participation, self-enhancement and development. How does the involvement of participants affect their sense of community, sense of self, social skills and overall well-being? What conditions are required for rituals to contribute to the self-enhancement of those involved? What insights do the empirical cases presented in preceding sessions give us?

09.00-10.30 **Jörg Zirfas**

„Fast Food and Fun: Well-being in modern Eating Rituals“

Izumi Kuroishi

“Shinjo Matsuri: Youth Rehabilitation and Community construction by the circulation of decorated floats”

Susanne Klien

“Bullfighting, Self-Enhancement and Well-being in Rural Japan”

10.30-11.00 Coffee Break

Session 4

11.00-12.30 Round-table discussion of three topics (20 minutes each):

- Ageing, well-being and rituals
- Methods
- Body, well-being and rituals

Discussing publishing options

Wrap up of workshop

12.30-13.45 Lunchbox (DIJ)

13.45 End of workshop

List of Speakers

(alphabetical order)

Peter Ackermann, Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

Ingrid Kellermann, Freie Universität Berlin

Susanne Klien, DIJ Tokyo

Klaus-Peter Köpping, Freie Universität Berlin

Izumi Kuroishi, Aoyama Gakuin University

William Lee, University of Manitoba

Yoko Nagao, Wako University

Shoko Suzuki, Kyoto University

John W. Traphagan, University of Texas at Austin

Bruce White, Doshisha University

Christoph Wulf, Freie Universität Berlin

Jörg Zirfas, Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg